

# Wallneuk North Church Paisley

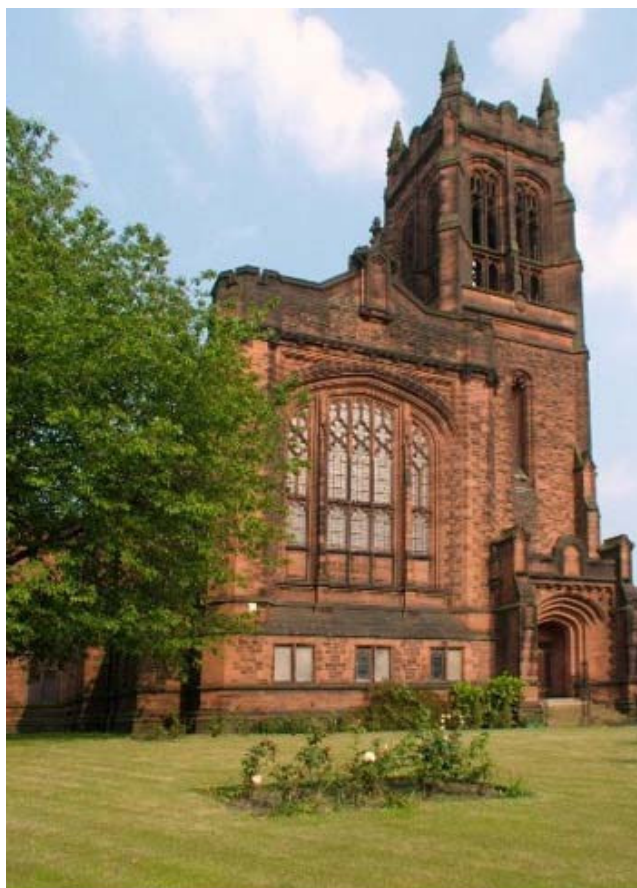
## Parish Profile

### Who and Where we are

Sitting prominently at the centre of the one way system in the heart of Paisley, Wallneuk North Church (built between 1912 and 1915 under the auspices of former mill owner Peter Coats Esq.) is home to a gathered congregation of some 483 members.

The parish covers some 3000+ of a population although you will find that parish boundaries are fluid. In reality, due to Network Paisley with which we are involved, the combined parish covers some 11,000+ people (source 2001 census). More details about how this operates will be found later in this profile.

The building is physically large and imposing with a sanctuary that seats in excess of 800 people. Adorning the sanctuary



are banners that are made by our active banner group.



Certainly imposing to look at and be in, there is nevertheless a warm feeling about the place with pleasant acoustics and lighter wood colours, as well as a striking dark wood curved ceiling. A fine pipe organ (Abbot and Smith 1931) sits at the back of the chancel area.

The Church also has a large hall, a small hall, a traditional session

room, a couple of smaller meeting rooms, a vestry and a recently refurbished Kitchen.

The fabric is continually maintained and no major outstanding issues are known with the building, except those that normally go with a building of this age.

## **LOCATION**

The church building is situated a mere 5 minutes walk from the town centre of Paisley with its historic Abbey, 2 shopping centres, restaurants and cafes. Paisley is also home to Renfrewshire Council's main offices.

Less than 10 minutes by car takes you directly onto the M8 motorway enabling easy access to Glasgow and Edinburgh (going eastbound) and Greenock (going westbound).

3 minutes walking takes you to the entrance of Gilmour Street Train Station with its frequent trains into Glasgow Central or going the other direction towards Wemyss Bay, Largs, Ayr and Ardrossan.

The parish area itself is very mixed between private and local authority housing. Much of the old local authority housing, particularly in the Shortroods area of Paisley, is in the process of being demolished and is to be replaced with modern low cost housing and housing association properties.

In fact, this is true over much of the combined parish area with huge amounts of money having been invested during recent years in the housing stock of Ferguslie Park.

Wallneuk North used to be responsible for a large section of the Gallowhill housing area but since becoming part of the North Joint Working Association this has been given over to Sandyford (Thread Street) Church of Scotland. Undoubtedly, though, some historical links remain with the Gallowhill area and several of our members still come from that part of Paisley.

Within the Parish area is also the Springbank sheltered housing complex situated near to the Love Street football ground where St Mirren play.

Other denominations are represented in the parish area too, in particular St James's Roman Catholic Church, St Barnabas' and Holy Trinity Episcopal Churches and the Mossvale community Church.

The combined Parish area will continue to change in the coming years.

Also of importance will be the proposed new rail link to Glasgow Airport

recently approved by the Scottish Parliament which will cut through part of the combined parish area.

The population will continue to grow as well with several housing developments being proposed for the coming years. 200 new houses, for example, are to be built in the Shortroods area of our parish.

## **EDUCATION**

No description of our parish boundaries would be complete without mentioning that Reid Kerr Further Education College is situated very close to our church and that there are non denominational primary schools within the combined parish area as follows:

- ⌘ Ferguslie Primary ([www.ferguslie.renfrewshire.sch.uk/](http://www.ferguslie.renfrewshire.sch.uk/))
- ⌘ Craigielea Primary ([www.craigielea.renfrewshire.sch.uk/](http://www.craigielea.renfrewshire.sch.uk/)).
- ⌘ Mossvale Primary School ([www.mossvale.renfrewshire.sch.uk/](http://www.mossvale.renfrewshire.sch.uk/))

There are 2 Roman Catholic Primary Schools – St Fergus’ in Ferguslie Park and St James’ (which shares a building with Mossvale Primary).

There are also informal links with Nursery at the Beechwood Community Centre.

## **What happens at Wallneuk North Church?**

At the heart of our church life is worship on a Sunday morning at 11a.m. The congregation have been used to a wide range of worship styles, drawing from a breadth of worship material and ecumenical traditions.

Our main hymn book is CH4 although in reality we have drawn from a much wider base than this. 40 of our members take part in regular reading of the Sunday morning Bible readings. There are approximately 130 people in church each week although, as with other congregations, this rises and falls according to season and occasion.

Each Sunday during the school year our Young Church meet. Currently this has a core of up to 25 children.

There is a monthly communion service after church on the first Sunday of most months with full communion services being held in September, December, March and June.

There is also, between September and late April/early May, a weekly service on a Wednesday which sees lunch being shared after the 20 minute act of worship. The leading of that service does not fall just to our minister but to

one of our presbytery accredited worship leaders and a variety of visiting preachers.

There are nightly evening services during Holy Week as well, being shared amongst worship leaders and minister. Maundy Thursday has been a united service with St James's and St Ninian's and there is a Palm Sunday Celebration evening service at St Ninian's plus an early Easter morning service that rotates between St James's and Wallneuk North Church.



Other groups that use the church are as follows:

- ⌘ Banner Group
- ⌘ Flower Group
- ⌘ Singing Group
- ⌘ Girl Guides
- ⌘ Circle of Friends
- ⌘ Badminton
- ⌘ Men's Club
- ⌘ Little Treasures

Our premises are also used by groups as diverse as Alcoholics Anonymous, the Boys' Brigade and the local Presbyterial Guild Council. An after-school club also meets in the halls and during the summer some members of the congregation run activities for people with Special Needs.

Administratively, the church operates under the newly approved unitary constitution with meetings being held in 10 months of the year. On alternate months we hold full business meetings or team meetings.

There are 5 teams attached to the Kirk Session as follows:

- A. Welcome – door duties, social, new members
- B. Working – caring and communication
- C. Worshipping – reading rotas, music, flowers, banners, young church, child protection

D. Stewardship and Finance – offerings, fundraising and general finances

E. Fabric – Property and grounds maintenance, hall lettings

The 5 leaders of these groups also form a co-ordinating team which meets monthly or bi-monthly as required with the minister.

## **The Task Ahead**

In common with many other churches our congregation is facing the challenge of a declining and ageing membership – 55% of our membership is now over the age of 70 and although we are proud of the families who worship with us, we are acutely aware of the need to develop this ministry further.

The needs of our parish are also considerable and whilst the demographics are changing, and will continue to change, there are very considerable social needs which the minister in our church is faced with – sooner rather than later. This is particularly true across the combined parish area of Network Paisley and was one of the key reasons why this new venture began.

Whilst each of the three churches in Network Paisley are constitutionally separate as well as being Minister of Wallneuk North Church our minister gives a third of his time to St Ninian's, Ferguslie Park and to the combined parish area.

This has meant, for example, that once a month the minister of either St James' or Wallneuk North takes the Sunday service in St Ninian's Ferguslie Park with the deacon based there conducting worship in whichever pulpit falls empty.

It also means that whilst each minister maintains responsibility for their own members' funerals, they are expected to participate in coverage once every three weeks of funerals within the wider parish grouping.



There are two projects supported by Network Paisley – STAR and STEP. Both of these have full time employees attached to them.

There is a management structure which coordinates the work of the combined parish area and of these projects and our minister is an integral part of that task.

The ministry team – of 2 ministers, a deacon, a congregational support worker and a part time pastoral assistant (who is also a reader) – discuss matters openly, meets together, prays together and encourages each other.

This has enabled a sharing of approaches across the three churches on matters such as baptisms, communions, weddings, funerals, joint worship opportunities and school chaplaincy where the team looks out for the needs of the group as well as of their individual church.

## **Statistics**

The following table gives information about number of weddings, funerals and baptisms conducted over the last few years. Some of the baptisms are adult ones and were usually connected to confirmation services.

<b>Year</b>	<b>2005</b>	<b>2004</b>	<b>2003</b>
<b>Membership</b>	493	514	546
<b>Baptisms</b>	6 (1 adult)	7	17 (3 adult)
<b>Weddings</b>	5	12	5
<b>Funerals</b>	32 (12 parish)	30 (15 parish)	41 (23 parish)